PHALANX MOBILE APPLICATIONS
OVERVIEW

PHALANX is an industrial mobile applications platform combining barcode and Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), operational apps (running on smart phones and tablets) and integration with back-office systems on a single software solution. In this document, we explore three business scenarios where the technology can be utilised to solve inherent problems associated with work and equipment management.

These include:

• Equipment Logistics

• Field Maintenance & Inspection

• Warehouse Operations

In each instance, we expose the error, delay and cost generated by reliance on paper in industrial operations.

We also show how a switch to mobile operations addresses the biggest problems caused by paper, including transcription and transposition errors, time delays and poor data integrity.

This is an important step for utilities companies in complying with OFGEM's RIIO framework and can make the difference between reward and sanctions by helping to ensure the requisite network reliability, asset lifespan and customer satisfaction.

PHALANX offers an opportunity to streamline and integrate operations. Scanning a barcode or RFID tag to identify equipment removes the risk of error. It's also much easier to ensure compliance, as PHALANX apps use workflow steps, electronic data forms and checklists for each process.

PHALANX also increases efficiency by automating tasks that would otherwise be handled manually. PHALANX has been proven to improve the core pillars of equipment operations: safety, reliability and return on invested capital.

With this in mind, read on to discover how PHALANX can be delivered rapidly and start offering immediate business benefits through real-time visibility and integration to your back office systems.

CONTENTS

PHALANX MOBILE APPLICATIONS
EQUIPMENT LOGISTICS

AS THINGS STAND

The traditional approach of using multiple paper forms and human effort to track and manage the movement of physical equipment simply does not fit with the goal of lean operations.

Not only does the traditional approach waste time for overworked technicians, managers and administrative staff (who must record, transcribe and re-key handwritten notes into back-office systems) but it also impacts on productivity and costs due to lower equipment utilization and revenue leakage caused by missing equipment.

Meanwhile, regulatory compliance standards for equipment management and repair are increasingly strict. Non-compliance can critically affect a business's reputation, require operational shutdown or, in extreme cases, endanger lives.

WITH PHALANX

Replacing paperwork with PHALANX Apps improves operational efficiency by increasing real-time equipment visibility.

Integration between back-office systems and PHALANX enabled mobile devices allows staff to quickly scan and identify equipment using easy-to-apply barcodes or RFID tags. This means that an organisation's equipment and stock database will always accurately reflect operational reality.

PHALANX has dedicated apps to support the delivery, return, transfer, inspection, repair and test of equipment. Connecting the flow of information between all departments provides a simple interface for all involved to quickly check the current status and history of any item of equipment.

The probability of equipment being unavailable to support field staff drops significantly, as will the delay in moving equipment and spare parts to the correct depot or truck to satisfy demand.

As well as higher equipment utilization and increased job profitability, back-office and depot staff are also freed to spend more time managing customers, work and equipment, as opposed to time-consuming and error-prone paperwork.

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APPS FOR OPERATIONS

PHALANX MOBILE APPLICATIONS
FIELD MAINTENANCE AND INSPECTION

AS THINGS STAND

The amount of time field technicians spend processing paperwork can often be excessive. For instance, the average time for a technician to write equipment serial and parts numbers to satisfy a simple three line work order is around 90 seconds, while the probability of error can be as much as 10%.

Commonly, while a work order starts its life in a company's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) or Computerised Maintenance Management System, (CMMS) system, it is eventually printed out and given to a technician.

Then, when the work has been completed, the data captured must be accurately recorded to close the work order and update equipment and other histories. This error-prone manual process simply cannot compete with the speed and accuracy of integrated mobile apps.

WITH PHALANX

What if field technicians always had the correct equipment and spare parts available at the beginning of the day to satisfy workload?

And what if service and logistics planners could view equipment stock across all depots and trucks, allocate work remotely and instantly check on the progress of field work.

By providing real-time visibility across the field service operation, PHALANX makes these concepts a reality.

Work can be communicated to field technicians instantly on their smartphone, where they can 'ping' a piece of equipment's barcode or RFID tag to match the selected equipment against the order.

Capturing field service information directly and digitally from the field will improve operational efficiency and the quality and volume of structured data captured can be used to create pro-active maintenance campaigns.

FURTHER READING

CLICK TO VIEW

WHITE PAPER
PAPERLESS DEPOT WHITE PAPER

OVERVIEW
APPS TO SUPPORT AN EQUIPMENT RENTAL SCENARIO

CASE STUDY
BALFOUR BEATTY: AN INTERNAL EQUIPMENT RENTAL CASE STUDY

CASE STUDY
AGGREKO: AN EXTERNAL EQUIPMENT RENTAL CASE STUDY

CASE STUDY
AKER SOLUTIONS

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APPS FOR OPERATIONS

PHALANX MOBILE APPLICATIONS
WAREHOUSE OPERATIONS

AS THINGS STAND

In many ways, warehouse operations is a more natural fit for paperless working than an office.

That's because the administration of operations is less about collaboration and more about communicating what needs to be done and duly recording what was done.

Paper-based goods receipt and warehousing processes are crippling many fast moving operations, often resulting in large backlogs of unprocessed goods lying idle in the receiving bay.

Commonly, errors in equipment quantity or warehouse location can slow down, or even stop, a lean operation. Meanwhile, many businesses suffer from lower equipment utilization and lost revenue due to equipment being incorrectly marked as unavailable.

From our experience, as many as one in every five deliveries received contains an error that (if noticed) requires manual rework by the back-office and warehouse staff, while a 5 line delivery order, even when correct, takes an average of 8 minutes for warehouse staff to goods receipt and put away.

WITH PHALANX

PHALANX apps enable warehouse teams to produce instant goods receipts with no manual data entry. Staff can process received goods by scanning barcodes with a handheld mobile device against the expected delivery lines, avoiding the need to create paperwork or waste time travelling to a desk-bound PC to key in data.

Key benefits include reduced working capital as a result of increased inventory throughput and the ability to automatically match supplier invoices to a purchase order.

Meanwhile, the PHALANX Stock Count app manages cycle and traditional full inventory counts for fast, easy and accurate stock counts. This enables real-time visibility, including variance and performance of users.

With PHALANX, there will be a significant reduction in data entry errors and rework time. This increases the efficiency of staff and it is realistic to expect an 80%+ reduction in the time spent receipting goods.

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